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EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

2. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Bobby Truong (reg. 37, 499) on October 22, 2008.

3. The applicant has been amended as follow:

1. Currently Amended) A system, comprising:

an inter-company collaboration system comprising:

a first set of one or more utility servers maintained by a first company;

a first data storage mechanism associated with the first set of utility servers, the first data storage mechanism storing a set of execution data;

a first set of resources residing on the first set of utility servers, wherein the first set of resources comprises an application that executes on

the first set of utility servers and that operates on the set of execution data;

a secure network connection between the first set of utility servers and a second company; and

a first access control mechanism configured to control access, by the first company and the second company, to the first set of resources and to the secure network connection, wherein access to the first set of resources is limited to specific authorized individuals that are associated with the first company and specific authorized individuals that are associated with the second company; and

an isolated system that is communicatively coupled to the collaboration system, comprising:

a second set of one or more utility servers maintained by the first company;

a second set of resources residing on the second set of utility servers, wherein the second set of resources comprises the application and a set of debugging resources;

a second data storage mechanism associated with the second set of utility servers, the second data storage mechanism including:

a first storage portion that contains data that is shared with the collaboration system, including the set of execution data;

and

a second storage portion that contains data that is private to the isolated system, wherein the data that is private to the isolated system includes source code associated with the application; and

a second access control mechanism configured to control access to the second set of utility servers, wherein access to the second set of utility servers is limited to specific authorized individuals that are associated only with the first company;

wherein the application is executed on the second set of utility servers and operates on the set of execution data stored in the first storage portion of the second data storage mechanism, and wherein the set of debugging resources is used by one or more authorized individuals associated with the first company to debug the application.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a switching mechanism coupled to the first data storage mechanism and the second data storage mechanism, configured to control copying of the data that is shared with the collaboration system to the first and second data storage mechanisms and to control copying of the data that is private to the isolated system to only the second data storage mechanism.
3. Canceled

Art Unit: 2444

4. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[3]] 1, wherein the application is an electronic design automation (EDA) application.
5. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[3]] 1, wherein the set of execution data that is shared between the collaboration system and the isolated system includes a set of data that represents an electronic design created using the application.
6. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[3]] 1, wherein the second set of resources further comprises:
a compiler for compiling the source code associated with the application.

7-12 Canceled

13. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
controlling access to a first set of one or more utility servers maintained by a first company, wherein access to the first set of utility servers is limited to authorized individuals associated the first company and authorized individuals associated with a second company to enable the first company and the second company to collaborate using the first set of utility servers;
executing an application on the first set of utility servers, wherein the application operates on a set of execution data;
controlling access to a second set of one or more utility servers maintained by the first company, wherein access to the second set of utility servers is limited to

Art Unit: 2444

authorized individuals associated with the first company only such that the second set of utility servers is isolated from the second company; sharing the set of execution data between the first set of utility servers and the second set of utility servers; executing the application on the second set of utility servers, and having the application operate on the set of execution data to recreate on the second set of utility servers one or more situations encountered on the first set of utility servers; and debugging the application on the second set of utility servers, wherein the set of utility servers has access to private data that is not accessible to the first set of utility servers;

wherein the private data comprises source code for the application, and wherein debugging the application comprises making one or more changes to the source code to derive a set of updated source code.

14. Canceled

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[14]] 13, further comprising: compiling the updated source code on the second set of utility servers.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[14]] 13, wherein the application is an electronic design automation (EDA) application, and wherein the set of execution data represents an electronic design created using the EDA application.

Art Unit: 2444

17. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

means for controlling access to a first set of one or more utility servers maintained by a

first company, wherein access to the first set of utility servers is limited to authorized individuals associated the first company and authorized individuals associated with a second company to enable the first company and the second company to collaborate using the first set of utility servers;

means for executing an application on the first set of utility servers, wherein the application operates on a set of execution data;

means for controlling access to a second set of one or more utility servers maintained by the first company, wherein access to the second set of utility servers is limited to authorized individuals associated with the first company only such that the second set of utility servers is isolated from the second company;

means for sharing the set of execution data between the first set of utility servers and the second set of utility servers;

means for executing the application on the second set of utility servers, and having the application operate on the set of execution data to recreate on the second set of utility servers one or more situations encountered on the first set of utility servers; and

means for debugging the application on the second set of utility servers, wherein the set of utility servers has access to private data that is not accessible to the first set of utility servers;

Art Unit: 2444

wherein the private data comprises source code for the application, and wherein the means for debugging the application comprises means for making one or more changes to the source code to derive a set of updated source code.

18. Canceled

19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[18]] 17, further comprising:
means for compiling the updated source code on the second set of utility servers.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[18]] 17, wherein the application is an electronic design automation (EDA) application, and wherein the set of execution data represents an electronic design created using the EDA application.

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

With respect to claims 1, 13, and 17, the prior art of record, individually or in combination, fails to teach, suggest or render obvious the claimed invention in combination with specific amended limitations as recited in claims 1, 13, and 17. Specially, inter alias, the prior art of the record fails to teach or suggest an inter-company collaboration system comprising: a first set of one or more utility servers maintained by a first company; a first data storage mechanism associated with the first set of utility servers, the first data storage mechanism storing a set of execution data; a first set of resources residing on the first set of utility servers,

wherein the first set of resources comprises an application that executes on the first set of utility servers and that operates on the set of execution data; a secure network connection between the first set of utility servers and a second company; and a first access control mechanism configured to control access, by the first company and the second company, to the first set of resources and to the secure network connection, wherein access to the first set of resources is limited to specific authorized individuals that are associated with the first company and specific authorized individuals that are associated with the second company; and an isolated system that is communicatively coupled to the collaboration system, comprising: a second set of one or more utility servers maintained by the first company; a second set of resources residing on the second set of utility servers, wherein the second set of resources comprises the application and a set of debugging resources; a second data storage mechanism associated with the second set of utility servers, the second data storage mechanism including: a first storage portion that contains data that is shared with the collaboration system, including the set of execution data; and a second storage portion that contains data that is private to the isolated system, wherein the data that is private to the isolated system includes source code associated with the application; and a second access control mechanism configured to control access to the second set of utility servers, wherein access to the second set of utility servers is limited to specific authorized individuals that are associated only with the first company; wherein the application is executed on the second set of utility servers and operates on the set of execution data stored in the first storage portion of the second data storage

mechanism, and wherein the set of debugging resources is used by one or more
authorized individuals associated with the first company to debug the application.
(as disclosed in specification paragraphs 0070-0072, 0039, 0102, 0109, 0110,
0116, and 0106-0107).

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee, and avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submission should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reason for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tammy T. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-3929. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:30 - 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, *William Vaughn* can be reached on 571-272-3922. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you

Art Unit: 2444

have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Thanh Tammy Nguyen/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2144